

NOTE: QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN LISTED AND ANSWERED IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY WERE RECEIVED. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ARE NOT SOLICITED.

NOTE: THERE IS NO CHANGE TO THE DATE/TIME PROPOSALS ARE DUE. PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY 1:00 PM, LOCAL TIME, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2004.

1) What is the projected contract start date for AFP? What start date should be used for pricing purposes?

IRS anticipates a start date for this requirement of March 1, 2005.

2) Reference – L.6 - The Recruitment/Retention Plan is not identified in Section L. We intend to include this as an appendix to the Technical Proposal, with the Management Plan, Transition Plan, and QA Plan also included as appendices. Is this acceptable to the Government?

Yes.

3) Reference: Section F.4 mentions that in addition to the Quality Control Plan, Transition Plan and Management Plan that a Recruitment and Retention Plan shall be submitted as part of the Contractor's Proposal. Is the Recruitment and Retention Plan included in the 50 page limit for the Technical Proposal or is it excluded as are the other required Plans (Section L.6)?

The Recruitment and Retention Plan is NOT included in the 50 page limit for the technical proposal (see also Amendment 0003, question 8)

4) Reference L.6.1(b) - Regarding the requirement for five completed Past Performance Questionnaires for bidders with more than one team member. Is a total of five questionnaires from the bidding Team requested, or does the Government want five questionnaires from the bidding prime contractor and additional questionnaires for any team member relevant contracts?

IRS requires five completed Past Performance Questionnaires from the prime offeror, plus additional questionnaires for any proposed team members. The additional number of questionnaires should be commensurate with the amount/percentage of work the proposed team members will be performing.

5) Reference C.3.1.3 – Will space be made available at the IRS Headquarters Facilities for the Contractor's Project Manager to reside?

It is not anticipated that the contractor's project manager will be located on-site at IS. Office space may be made available on the days the project manager meets with the COTR, but daily 'on-site' project manager presence is not currently anticipated. See also Amendment 0003, Question 9.

6) Reference: SF-33, Block 9, Amendment 0001, Block 14 and RFP Section L.10, pg.84. SF-33, Block 9 and Amendment 0001, Block 14 both state the proposal is due by 1:00pm on November 30, 2004. However, RFP Section L.10, pg. 84 states the proposals are due on date [blank] and time 3:00pm. Please confirm proposals are due 1:00pm on Tuesday, November 30, 2004.

PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY 1:00 PM LOCAL TIME, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2004.

7) Reference Attachment 3 – Intelligence Analyst is the only position that has a requirement for a Top Secret Security Clearance. All other positions require a Sensitive Security Clearance. Please provide clarification of why the requirement for the Intelligence Analyst is not consistent with the other labor categories OR does the Intelligence Analyst only require a Sensitive Security Clearance.

The requirement for Intelligence Analysts to be able to receive a Top Secret Clearance is a function of their area of responsibility and the type of work they may be required to perform.

8) Reference Attachment 1 – Pricing Tables. Is the Contractor required to use the spreadsheet provided? Will the Government accept the Contractor's format as long as it contains the information provided outlined in Attachment 1?

IRS will accept an offeror's format as long as it contains all the information provided and required by Attachment 1.

9) Reference Attachment 1 – Hours in the Pricing Tables. The spreadsheet the Government provided contains hours in two different formats i.e. a) worksheet tabs labeled by performance period (contents include hours by labor categories by location) and b) worksheet tabs labeled by labor category (contents include hours by location). The hours presented in these two formats do not equal one another (e.g. Hours for Program Manager shown within a) for the base year = 1386 (listed twice). Hours for Program Manager shown within b) for the base year = 2080. Please clarify the hours that should be proposed by labor category by location and confirm that the information should be presented in the two formats 1) Price by Year (all labor categories by location/city) and 2) Price by Labor Category (by Region with each location/city shown by each year).

Attachment J-1, Section B Pricing Tables, for the Base Year, should read “Project Manager, Washington, DC, 1386 hours.” The next ‘set’ of hours, for Springfield, NJ (1386 hours), Washington, DC (1386 hours) Plantation, FL (2772 hours) and Los Angeles, CA (1386 hours) are for INTELLEGENCE ANALYSTS.

Hours should be proposed by labor category and location, with sufficient supporting data for evaluation.

Attachment J-2 – Places of Performance& Proposed Staffing Plan, is simply another method of describing the required labor categories, the required number of personnel, and the required locations. There is no requirement to present your pricing proposal in this format.

10) Reference Attachment 1 – Please confirm only overtime rates should be provided and no hours will be assigned to the overtime rates for pricing purposes. Therefore, the total price will reflect only regular rates and assigned hours without the impact of overtime.

Only overtime rates should be provided. No hours will be assigned to the overtime rates for pricing purposes. The total price should reflect only regular hourly rates and the assigned hours per position.

11) Reference Attachment 1 – Please explain the tab within the spreadsheet the Government provided labeled Composite of All. The content of this tab is labeled Option Year 1. Please confirm that this information is only required for Option Year 1. Please explain the numbering convention 0001 through 0045 contained on this tab.

Section J, Attachment 1, “Section B Pricing Tables,” consists of pricing data for the base period plus the four options. The additional “tabs”/tables are not required. However, be advised that offerors must provide sufficient supporting data in order for IRS to evaluate your proposal. A ‘revised’ Section J, Attachment 1, “Section B Pricing Tables” is incorporated into this Amendment 0004.

12) Reference Attachment 2 – Places of Performance & Proposed Staffing Plan. Please clarify whether or not this information should be used for pricing purposes. If so, please explain the Government’s expectation of how this information should be used for pricing purposes. Also, please explain the correlation between Attachment 2 and the hours provided in Attachment 1.

Attachment 1 provides the labor categories by location to be priced, for the base period plus all four options. Attachment 2 provides the proposed staffing plan per location, with the exception of the Project Manager, to be located within commuting distance of the COTR's location in Washington, DC.

13) Reference B.2(d) and L.6.2 – There is no line-item available for materials and ODCs in B.2(d). However, L.6.2 includes language for anticipated materials and ODCs. Where should these figures be shown/presented as part of the pricing?

Include materials and ODC costs, if any, in Section B.2(d). Attached is REVISED Section B.2(d). Note that any Other Direct Costs or materials included must be fully explained and sufficient pricing detail must be included to allow evaluation.

14) The term Total Fringe Benefit Factor is 32.85 means what?

“32.85%” is the fringe benefit factor applicable to civil servants if performing similar work. This percentage would be applied to labor dollars.

15) Section B.1 states that the Base Period is 12 months from date of award, while Attachment J-1 shows 1386 hours on the Base Year All Labor Categories worksheet and shows 2080 hours on the individual Labor Category Base Year worksheets. Which reference is to be used for the Base Year calculations?

Use 1,386 for the “Base Year” calculations; the Base Year is anticipated to start on March 1, 2005, and will run from that date (i.e., the date of award) through September 30, 2005. Option Period 1 will begin October 1, 2005.

16) Reference: C.2.5 Transition Requirements and Transition Plan -- Question: The transition to a new contractor will require coordination with the incumbent. The Transition Plan provided by the incumbent with their proposal was approved and made a material part of the resulting contract. We submitted a FOIA request for the incumbent's contract, but the Transition Plan was not provided. In their plan, the incumbent has presumably made certain commitments to the Government in terms of its Phase-Out activities. It would appear to be in the interests of both the Government and the new contractor for bidders to be able to develop their Phase-In plans in concert with the incumbent's existing Phase-Out plan. Since the incumbent is no longer eligible to prime this contract, release of this plan cannot cause them competitive harm. The Offeror therefore requests that the incumbent's transition Plan be made available to bidders.

The transition will necessarily require coordination with the incumbent contractor. However, the Transition Plan we are asking you to provide should be a stand alone document, not dependent upon any other document, and unique to your company and how you will approach transitioning into this work. The Transition Plan will be reviewed in accordance with the evaluation factors to gauge your understanding of the scope of work.

17) Reference: C.2.5 Transition Requirements and Transition Plan -- Question: The Transition Plan is not listed as an evaluated item in Section M. Will the Transition Plan be evaluated as part of the competitive procurement process? If so, what evaluation factors and weights will be utilized?

The Transition Plan is considered a part of Technical/Management Approach and will be evaluated as part of that factor.

18) Reference: C.2.5.1 Phase-in -- Question: Since this contract will be awarded to a non-incumbent contractor, is it the Government's desire that the new contractor employ incumbent contractor personnel to the full extent practicable?

Offerors are encouraged to propose what they believe will provide the best solution in response to the requirements in the evaluation criteria and IRS's requirements. The decision to manage performance risk rests with the offeror.

19) Reference: C.2.5.1 Phase-in; "The following variables must be addressed: ... The positions to be retained; the positions to be replaced." -- Question: Are all positions identified in Section J, Attachment 2 currently staffed by incumbent personnel? If not, please identify any existing vacancies.

As of November 12, 2004, the following vacancies exist:

Washington, DC	Legal Technician - 2 positions
Brooklyn, NY	Intelligence Analyst
Central Islip, NY	Intelligence Analyst
New Orleans, LA	Data Analyst
New York City, NY	Intelligence Analyst
Cincinnati, OH	Legal Technician
Phoenix, AZ	Data Analyst
Norfolk, VA	Legal Technician

20) Reference: C.2.5.1 Phase-in; H.7 Personnel Security Requirements; and H 17 Background Investigations -- Questions: Are the requirements for the contractor to perform initial background checks (H.7) on all employees prior to starting work on this contract applicable to transitioned incumbent employees? Does the Government's

expectations of 5-7 days to obtain an interim clearance also apply to the Top Secret clearances? Also, in light of these requirements, what is the Government's expected timeframe for transition?

“Incumbent employees” will not require new background checks; they may transition over to the new contract. In order to begin work, all contractor personnel must have, at a minimum, an interim clearance, which IRS will obtain as quickly as possible. Note that the positions in which a Top Secret clearance will be required will not be able to obtain new TS clearances immediately. Those positions designated as requiring Top Secret clearances, but who, initially, only have interim clearances, will be performing in that position, with limited access to Top Secret data and information, until the Top Secret access is obtained. Transition time needs to be as quickly as possible.

21) Reference: C.3.2.6 Training Support -- Question: None of the provided labor category descriptions/requirements appear to support the higher level training support requirements of the solicitation. Which labor categories (and at which locations) currently provide this type of support. Also, what is the Government's expected timeframe post-award for the contractor to be developing training curricula or updating existing documents for policy or system-level type changes?

There are no contractor personnel currently fulfilling this requirement. IRS does, however, expect to utilize this task in the new contract. Offers are therefore requested to provide your approach and milestones in completing this task.

22) Reference: C.4.1. Recruitment/Retention; F.4(d) Recruitment and Retention. -- Question: Offerors are required to provide a copy of their Recruitment and Retention Plan with their proposals. However no instructions are provided in Section L as to where in the proposal this should be placed. In a previous question and answer, the Government implied that this should be included in the Technical Proposal. However, these plans often include financial/cost data that generally is not to be included in the Technical Proposal. Should this plan be provided as part of the Business Proposal? Also, Section M does not provide any information on how this plan will be evaluated or incorporated into the overall proposal evaluation. Will the Recruitment and Retention Plan be evaluated as part of the competitive procurement process? If so, what evaluation factors and weights will be utilized?

The Recruitment/Retention plan is not included in the 50 page limitation for the technical proposal (see Question 3). The Recruitment and Retention Plan should not contain any financial/cost data, and should be provided as part of the Technical Proposal. The Plan will be evaluated as part of the Technical/Management approach factor.

23) Reference: Section J, Attachment 3. Labor Categories Position Qualifications. -- Question: No position qualification narrative has been provided for the Project Manager. Per Section H.2, this is the only position considered to be Key Personnel. The Offeror requests that the Government provide the position qualifications for this position or amend section M.3, Criterion 4 to further clarify what standards the resume will be evaluated against.

No position qualification narrative will be provided for the Project Manager. M.3, Criterion 4 is amended to further clarify the standards for evaluation as follows:

Criterion 4 – Key Personnel

The resumes and references of personnel proposed to fill the key positions identified in H.2 will be evaluated based on their demonstrated ability to manage projects as well as their success in managing people, as demonstrated by the skill levels, background, education, training, skills and years of generalized/specialized experience in performing/managing the effort required under the proposed contract.

24) Reference: Section J, Attachment 6. Performance Metrics, Measures, and Monitoring Plan -- Questions: What is the monitoring plan for the provided metrics and measures? What are the performance standards and acceptable quality levels for the metrics provided? What are the incentives or disincentives for meeting or not meeting the performance standards?

See page 66 of Solicitation TIRNO-05-R-00003

25) Reference: L.6. "The 50-page limit for technical proposals does not include the ... Management Plan (C.3.1.3)." and L.6.1(a) Technical/Management Approach. -- Question: The proposal response requirements for the Technical/Management Approach generally mirror those of the required Management Plan. If these are different requirements, please clarify the distinction between these two sections.

The Technical/Management Approach encompasses not only the Management Plan but all aspects of the offeror's technical approach to fulfilling the requirements of the Statement of Work.

26) Reference: L.6. "The 50-page limit for technical proposals does not include the ... Quality Assurance Plan (C.3.2.2)." and L.6.1(c) Quality Control Systems.-- Question: The proposal response requirements for Quality Control Systems seem to all be contained within the Quality Assurance Plan. If these are different requirements, please clarify the distinction between these two sections.

Section C.2.2 addresses Quality Control, and the Quality Control Plan. Section C.2.3 addresses Quality Assurance and the IRS's monitoring of the contractor's performance. Provision L.6.1(c) provides instructions for addressing the offeror's quality control system. NOTE that in Provision L.6, the last paragraph identifies a "Quality Assurance Plan" when it should properly read a "Quality Control Plan," as addressed in C.2.2.

27) Reference: L.6. "The 50-page limit for technical proposals does not include the ... Quality Assurance Plan (C.3.2.2) or the Management Plan (C.3.1.3)." -- Question: As further clarification to the questions above, if the Quality Assurance Plan includes all information requested under Quality Control Systems, and the Management Plan contains all information requested under the Technical/Management Approach, is the 50-page limit only meant to include the Past Performance and Key Personnel (Project manager resume) sections?

No.

28) Will the Contractor be able to propose additional labor categories and fixed unit prices?

The offeror may proposal additional labor categories and fixed unit prices, but must fully explain the rationale behind such proposal.

29) Will the Contractor be able to propose various levels/prices of the labor categories provided in the RFP?

Yes.

30) The instructions for the Transition Plan request the offeror to identify "the positions to be retained; the positions to be replaced". First, is it correct to interpret "positions" to be the same as "labor categories"? Given this, if the offeror proposes to use replaced positions (labor categories), can we modify the Section J Attachment 2 pricing tables to include additional labor categories?

It is correct to interpret 'positions' to be the same as 'labor categories.' If the offeror proposes different labor categories, the pricing tables must reflect any changes and must encompass the entire proposal.

31) Paragraph C.3.2.3 requires that Intelligence Analysts shall possess Top Secret clearances. What, if any, security clearances must personnel in other labor categories possess? If clearances are not required for other personnel, what investigations, if any, will be required?

See Section J, Attachment 3 in the solicitation.

32) Must proposed personnel have the required clearances to be favorably evaluated under the RFP or will IRS accept, without penalty, “personnel who are eligible and ultimately meet the standards for the required clearances”?

See response to question 20.

33) Must the prime and any subcontractors have a Top Secret facility clearance?

See response to questions 7, and 20. See also Amendment 0001, questions 1 & 3.

34) What hardware and software are to be supported under paragraph C.3.2.4? What is typical scope of computer analysis and programming support required?

See Section J, Attachment 3 in the solicitation

35) We assume that the Contractor Project Manager will be located in the Washington, DC office. Is that correct?

No, see response to question 5 above.

35) Who is the present incumbent contractor? Is the present contractor eligible to participate as a prime or subcontractor under the new contract?

The incumbent contractor is STG, Inc. See response to question 18 above.

36) What arrangements have been made for proposing contractors to contact incumbent employees to discuss prospective employment?

Again, offerors are encouraged to propose what they believe will provide the best solution to IRS’s requirements. Offerors’ strategy and approach in proposal preparation are part of the business decisions each offeror must make.

37) Are the following included in the 50 page limit of the Technical Proposal? (1) Proposal Cover; (2) Required Cover Sheet; (3) Table of Contents and (4) Resumes?

The proposal cover is not included. The “Required Cover Sheet” is not included. The Table of Contents, if numbered, is included. The Resumes are included.

SECTION B – SUPPLIES/SERVICES AND PRICES

B.2 PRICING SCHEDULES

(d) Pricing:

0001 - BASE PERIOD -- 111,904 hours -- NOT TO EXCEED \$ _____

0002 - BASE PERIOD TRAVEL – NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000

0003 – BASE PERIOD MATERIAL/ODC’S \$ _____

1001 - OPTION PERIOD I – 111,904 hours – NOT TO EXCEED \$ _____

1002 - OPTION PERIOD I TRAVEL – NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000

1003 – OPTION PERIOD I MATERIAL/ODC’s \$ _____

2001 - OPTION PERIOD II – 111,904 hours – NOT TO EXCEED \$ _____

2002 - OPTION PERIOD II TRAVEL – NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000

2003 – OPTION PERIOD II MATERIAL/ODC’s \$ _____

3001 - OPTION PERIOD III – 111,904 hours – NOT TO EXCEED \$ _____

3002 - OPTION PERIOD III TRAVEL – NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000

3003 – OPTION PERIOD III MATERIAL/ODC’s \$ _____

4001 - OPTION PERIOD IV – 111,904 hours – NOT TO EXCEED \$ _____

4002 - OPTION PERIOD IV TRAVEL – NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000

4003 – OPTION PERIOD IV MATERIAL/ODCs \$ _____

TOTAL ESTIMATED CONTRACT PRICE: \$ _____

